

THE ROUND OF DEST'NY.

(Dedicated to the prophetic almanack-mongers.)

EVEN as erst, when the Pythian
Priestess, pretending to swoon,
Forged in the smoke of her smithy an
Artful political runc,
Doubtless Arcadian villagers,
Heedless of omens of war,
Careless of far-away pillagers,
Followed their herds as before;—

So, when oracular offices
Send me their leaflets of doom,
All unaffected by prophecies
Calmly my cleek I resume;
Bogeys of apocalyptic
Authors, whoe'er they may be,
Less than a gossamer whip tickle
One that has sliced from the tee.

Steady of eye as a halibut,
Stolid of will as a serf,
Plough I the soil of the valley (but
Always replacing the turf);
Where is your wiser philosopher?
Earth's international rubs
Harm not the soul who is boss of her
Surface by dint of his clubs.

Tell me no tales of a demagogue,
Read me no diplomat's wile;
Any old thing will set them agog,
Nothing can alter my style;
Here on this dune, with its sandy cap
Fronting the infinite main,
I and my 26 handicap
Start on our cycle again.

If you would garner my gratitude,
ZADKIEL, MOORE, and the rest,
Makers of mystical platitude,
Augurs of strife and unrest,
Tell me next year if some serious
Swerve in the counsels of Fate
Means to cut down my imperious
Card of 108.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DEAR MR. PUNCH,—Poiling with indignation, I beg leave to avail myself of the publicity of your columns to bring to the light of day yet another scandalous case of unemployment due directly and entirely to the iniquitous system of Free Trade under which Great Britain at present struggles. Reading, a few evenings ago, my paper, I found the following piteous demand for work:—

"Fat man wants job, age 32; 5 ft. 11; 21 stone; been on stage."

What could provide a better example of the handicap under which we labour than this advertisement? To think that this Briton, with his splendid natural advantages, should be condemned to waste away in desuetude (is that the word?) while, in the many penny shows now touring these islands, there are hundreds, nay, thousands, of



Material Customer. "WHAT'S THAT, WAITER?"

Soulful Waiter (captivated by the band). "THAT'S A BIT OF OUR MISS GIBBS, SIR!"

foreigners and infidels who have taken advantage of our lax laws to dump their mountains of flesh on our markets! Here we have an important British industry strangled, while the home-grown article advertises plaintively for a job of any kind. How much longer is this to continue? I naturally perused the "Wanted" column of my newspaper to see if I could find for our portly friend-in-need the best market for his wares. A'as, the most appropriate that I could find was the following:—

"Trousers press and stretcher, new condition; state lowest price; on approval."

Even for this I fear he is ineligible. It stipulates "new condition." He confesses to 32 years' wear.

Or again there is this:—

"First-class canvasser; no wasters.—Apply 7 to 9 p.m."

It is brief and not explicit, but it might suit.

A little further down I find the following:—

"Overcoat, warm, grey, good condition, fit ordinary man, 15s. 6d."

This again brings home to us the hard lot of our friend. Even the privilege of buying a warm grey overcoat for 15s. 6d. is denied to him. Picture his position as the winter nights grow colder. Does not this case from everyday life prove to every true Briton the iniquity of this penal Budget?*

I am, Yours etc.,

INDIGNANT BRITON.

* ["How does the Budget come into it?"—Ed. "Unearned increment!"—I. B.]

"However Cambridge 'packed' well, and finished their five men 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th."

Even a novice, we should have thought, could have packed them tighter than that.

THE LORDS' APPEAL TO THE PEOPLE.

[Hints for an Electoral address, following the line of argument adopted by the Radical Press.]

WHAT! Men of England! Shall it be
That you, a self-respecting nation,
Propose to crook a servile knee
And grovel at the Peers' dictation?
If so, you cannot be aware
What outrage you are asked to bear!

Then you shall hear the horrid truth.
We made a Bill, a perfect treasure;
We sent it up, and they, forsooth,
Said that on such a doubtful measure
(Here comes the insult) they preferred
That you should have the final word!

That Budget, simple, bright and terse,
They did not fling it back or flout it,
But, just to make you wince the worse,
Chose to invite your views about it!
Has Liberty been ever dealt
A nastier knock beneath the belt?

Not for ourselves we raise a squeal;
Our case is rough, but yours is rougher;
It is for you we rather feel,
Guessing how sadly you must suffer
At being asked if you detect
Anything wrong in your Elect.

For such were we four years ago,
And such we should by rights continue,
And you should not be asked to show
A reason for the faith that's in you—
A faith that's got some years to run
Before you need another one.

Meanwhile, if you incline to hold
No further views on any matter,
'Tis your prerogative of old
Which no one yet has sought to shatter;
For in defence of such a right
Even a worm would turn and bite.

So, if these self-anointed Peers
Challenge your claims (of which the sum is
That for a term of six full years
You're privileged to act as dummies)
And ask you what you really think,
Rise in your wrath and strike them pink.

Ay! this is Armageddon's eve!
To-morrow's fight shall mend or end 'em—
Stern chastisement, with no reprieve,
For that outrageous referendum;
Henceforth no Peer will lightly choose
To dare consult the People's views!

O. S.

In reply to a Woman's Suffrage deputation Lord CREWE has given it as his opinion that "the cause of free food will probably be strengthened by women's votes." Certainly the cause of free food, as supplied by the prison authorities, needs strengthening.

Under the heading "Extracts from the Registers of Bonds and Judgments," we read in *Perry's Gazette*:—

"Breen, Julia (plaintiff), Curraghgrague, Ballindaggin. . . . (Pronounced in Court, Oct. 27)."

A memorable occasion, which PERRY does well to record.

WEEK END WISDOM.

"We should be poor-spirited indeed if we did not welcome any fresh departure in journalism whose aim is to afford our judges [the British public], without prejudice and without favour, the clearest means of estimating the value of our ideas, the extent of our successes, even the depth of our shortcomings. . . . It is an arduous task to be impartial, but it is worth the effort, and I fancy that never more than now was the moment more propitious or the need more urgent."—*Mr. Lloyd George on "Independence in Criticism," in "The Week End."*

It is with great pleasure that we are able to furnish our readers with further extracts from special articles to be contributed by other leading politicians to journals of note.

Thus, the LORD ADVOCATE, writing on "The Need of Accuracy" in *The Precisian*, will make the following admirable and suggestive remarks:—

"No politician, certainly no one implicated, however humbly, in the Government of the country, can fail to welcome the exact and diligent presentation of facts bearing on current events. No doubt the prevailing tendency is to accept opinions presented on customarily recognised authority with too little scrutiny and often with a too unquestioning obedience. Hence the paramount importance of a paper which, aiming at impartiality as well as conciseness of statement, may well be found to meet the requirements of that vast body of the public which wishes to be guided, informed, and helped concisely, promptly and clearly on the great topics of the day—from the labourer pining in his hovel to the Duke squatting on his unearned millions. It is a difficult job to be accurate, but it is worth the effort, and I am convinced that never more than now was the moment more propitious or the need more imperative."

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL, discussing in *The Moderator* the need of restraint, will make the following timely comments:—

"There is no doubt that many speakers are carried away by wishing to make the meeting a success or to score a point and leave a vivid impression on the minds of their hearers; and they, therefore, sometimes cross the borderline without realising the effect some of their remarks may have. The busy age may to some extent account for this. The man whose future depends upon his tongue cannot always spare the necessary time to familiarise himself with the meticulous minutiae of a tedious theme. He may even find it difficult merely to ground himself in the broad issues of any comprehensive policy, and the temptation to economise time and thought by the simple process of looking only at one side of a question is almost irresistible. Again, the verisimilitude of an unconvincing statement is always hugely enhanced by a liberal resort to decorative polysyllables. In fine, to be accurate—*hic labor, hoc opus est*; but it is worth the struggle, and I feel that never more than at the present was the hour more opportune or the need more clamorous."

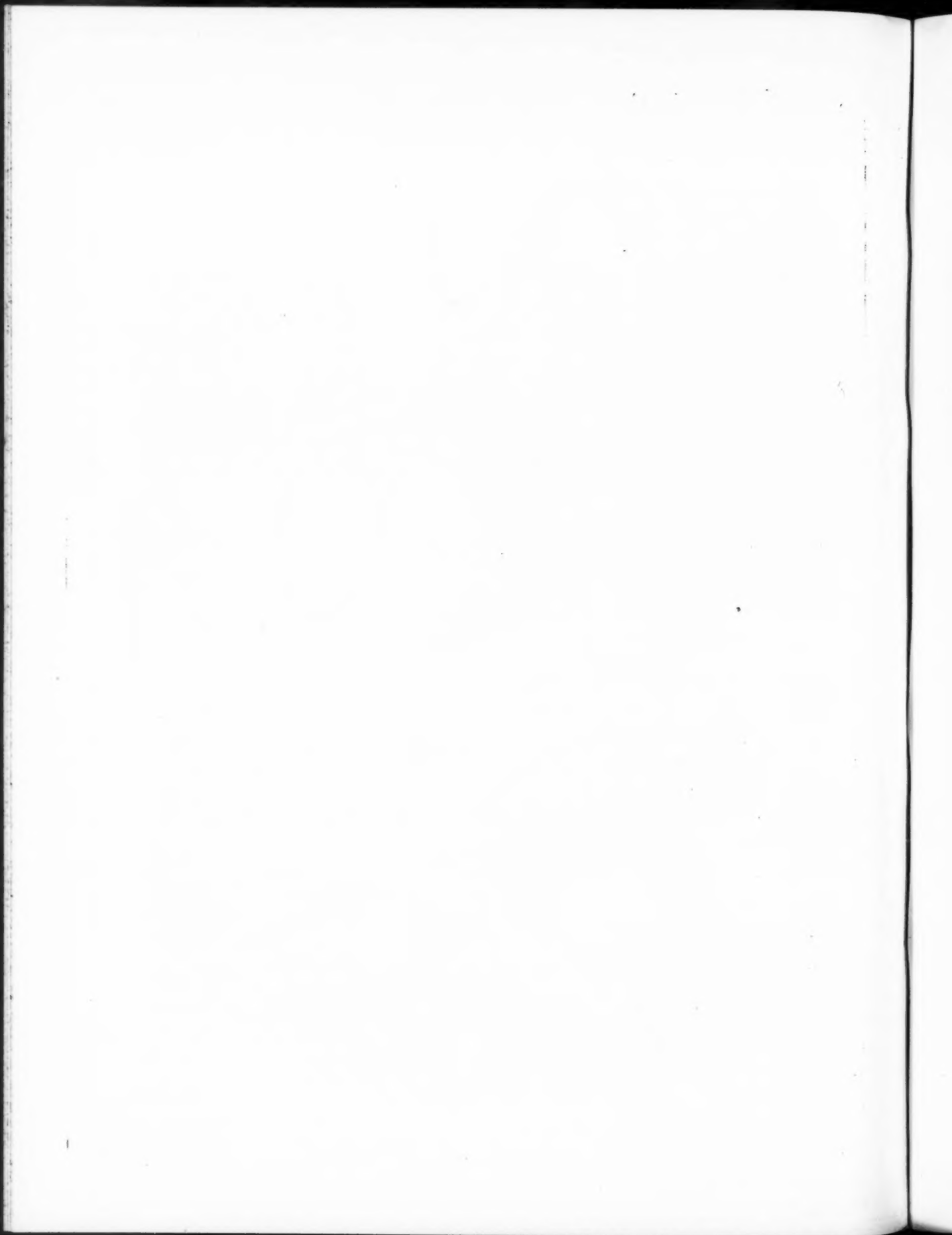
A COLOURABLE SUGGESTION.

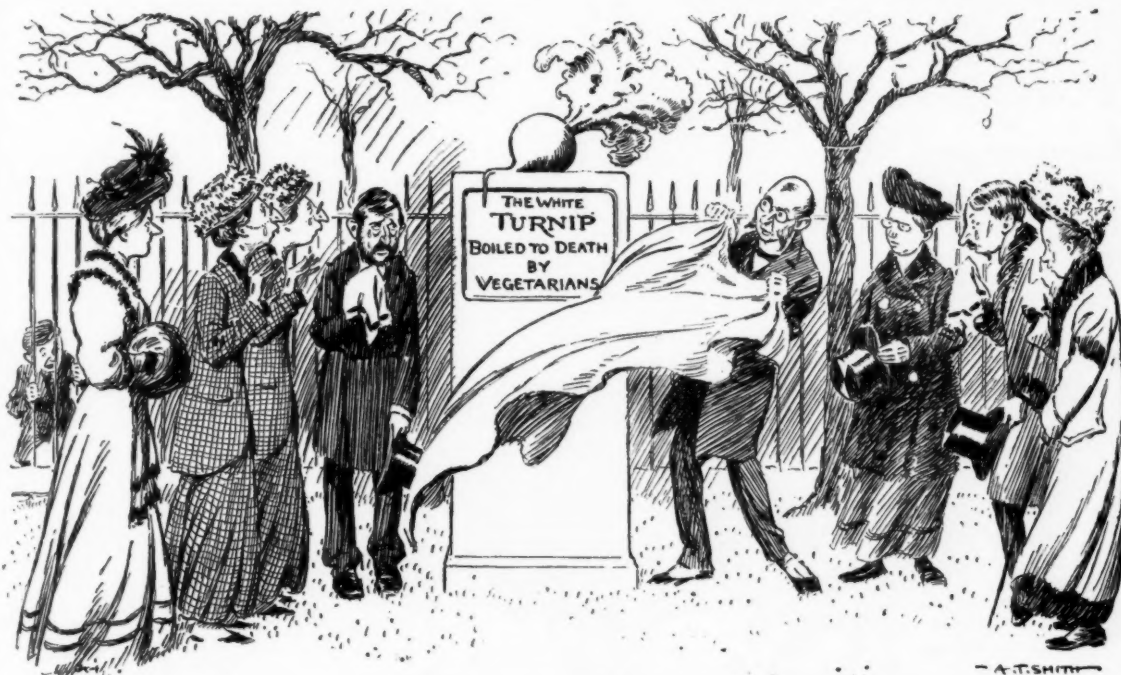
TROUBLE is imminent in house-decorating circles, as there seem to be theories abroad that wall-paper should harmonise, or contrast with, a person's—and more especially a lady's—mood, character and complexion. It will be no light matter for the chateleine of a country house, or the manageress of a hotel, to adjust the various apartments to her guests' idiosyncrasies, or *vice-versa*. What is going to happen if the choleric individual "sees red" on getting up in the morning, the hypochondriac has been quartered amid blue surroundings, and the *ingénue* is bestowed in the pink instead of the green bedroom? There will in all probability be some highly chromatic passages over the breakfast table, and the house party will be off colour for the rest of the day. If such a contretemps is likely to happen, the



THE GUILT OF DELAY.

CONGO SLAVE-DRIVER. "I'M ALL RIGHT. THEY'RE STILL TALKING."





SOCIETIES WE ADMIRE (BUT DO NOT BELONG TO).—No. 3.

THE SOCIETY FOR THE COMMEMORATION OF MODERN MARTYRS.

only solution is that intending week-enders should send on ahead, or bring with them, their appropriate wall-paper and bedroom hangings.

When the company is very mixed, the dining and reception rooms had better be decorated with a rainbow-hued and early-Victorian flowered pattern or leather mixture, otherwise there will be bolts from the blue and wigs on the green. The most popular visitors will, of course, be of the chameleon type, who take their colour from their environment, and suit their mood to the dado for the time being. An arrangement of coloured lights might also be brought into play with the aid of a competent theatrical limelight man, each conversationalist being suitably stimulated. This is quite a pretty idea, which we commend to the givers of American freak dinners. There will also be some consolation for the colour-blind.

Esprit de corps.

Passenger (to motor-bus conductor). "What's all this crowd about? Is it the mo or show?"

Conductor. "Yes, Sir, and the most successful show we've had so far."

"Two anglers who were fishing from Clacton Pier yesterday caught a cock pheasant that was swimming in the sea."—*Manchester Evening News.*

It will be remembered that we called attention a week or two ago to an eel which was mistaken by a fox for a cock pheasant. This is apparently the Manchester version of the story.

Natural History Notes.

Facts about the Bear: its Habits, Amusements and Limitations.

"The professional bears of Grand Trunks have been allowed to have a fair innings lately, but none would be surprised to witness the sudden clipping of their wings."—*Weekly Report.*

VALE!

[The *Life of Sir Robert Perks*, who is retiring from public life, has been written by Mr. DENIS CRANE.]

"PUT me among the good men," was my cry,
 "There let me live, and there enraptured die.
 I have no wish for men of common worth,
 The dull encumbrance of our patient earth.
 Not these, though useful, can fulfil my need,
 But men supreme in word and great in deed—
 Men who can give or lend a helping hand,
 And, grand themselves, teach others to be grand."
 In vain I cried, but at the last there came
 A man attuned to goodness and to fame.
 On all around he shed his matchless rays,
 And all around rejoiced to sing his praise.
 Within the public eye he wrought his works;
 His mien was modest and his name was PERKS.
 A space he lingered 'mid our fume and fret,
 Did good by stealth, became a Baronet;
 Learnt in division lobbies how to trudge it,
 And much disliked, nor voted for, the Budget,
 And then, grown weary of the endless strife,
 Withdrew his virtues from our public life.
 Farewell, farewell, majestic Methodist!
 Imperial Million-pounder, you'll be missed.
 Still, in your *Life* by Mr. DENIS CRANE
 You breathe and live and move and work again,
 And by your precept train the world to do
 Such things as few could do as well as you.

Commercial Candour.

"You can fool some of the people all the time, and all the people some of the time, but you can't fool all the people all the time." That is the idea on which our business has been built up.—*Advt. in "Johannesburg Daily Mail."*

CHARIVARIA.

M. CAMILLE FLAMMARION, the eminent astronomer, denies the report that life on Mars has been destroyed by a terrible cataclysm. This will cause great relief to persons having friends there.

It is so frequently said that enterprise is dead in this country, and that we have not the necessary grit to surmount obstacles, that we are pleased to hear that an English Cinematograph Company has at length overcome Mr. HALL CAINE'S well-known hatred of publicity, and has succeeded in obtaining a series of photographs of the great Manxman at home.

The decision that no drinks are to be sold to skaters at the new rinks strikes us as a wise one. It will obviate false charges being brought against persons who are unable to keep their equilibrium.

It is announced from St. Martin's-le-Grand that money orders can now be obtained anywhere in the United Kingdom for payment in Papua or Tonga. The news has been received quietly.

A writer in a Radical contemporary suggests that everyone in favour of Mr. LLOYD GEORGE'S proposals shall send a postcard to Lord LANSDOWNE with the words, "We demand the Budget" written thereon. We understand that the suggestion has the support of the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, who would, indeed, like to see the idea carried further, everybody of the opposite opinion using the same medium for the expression of his views.

At the present moment the PREMIER needs all the encouragement he can obtain, and he is said to be intensely gratified at receiving approval from his own daughter. "I think I may say that the Government has done well during its four years of office," said Miss VIOLET ASQUITH in opening a political bazaar at Hammersmith. It is very seldom that a man is a hero to his Violet.

We hear that the feeling of gratitude to the House of Lords felt in licensed victualling circles is something quite extraordinary, and a proposal that any peer, upon producing satisfactory evidence of identity, shall be served in any public-house in the United King-

dom with a mug of beer at half the ordinary price is being taken up enthusiastically.

"The stomach is not a vital organ," said a doctor at an inquest. "A person can get on quite well without one." This suggestion for a new operation comes just at the right moment. Society was getting tired of having its appendix removed.

"Accepting a wager of £20 that he dare not propose to the lady cashier, a railway-man in a restaurant at Lebeau, South Dakota," *The Daily Mail* tells us, "won the lady's heart and hand after a courtship lasting 2 min. 25 sec." The

forthcoming musical play. Let us hope it will be *à la D'O'YLY CARTE*.

A Croydon sweep, we are told by a contemporary, is a keen collector of china, and something of a *connoisseur* in that line. We are longing to know whether he has a special weakness for black Wedgwood, or does that remind him too much of his calling?

Poor Dr. BODIE! It now looks as if he had not even obtained an old waistcoat for his £8,000.

The small boy who writes to ask whether Bunyan Sunday, which was celebrated recently, has any connection with the Harvest Festival, which is held on the occasion of the Ingathering of the Corn, is recommended not to attempt humour till he is of riper years.

The Bi-hop of HULL, we are informed, is suffering from a severe strain of the ankle, caused by slipping on a banana skin. What bishops say on such occasions is still a matter of mystery.

TO INTENDING BARRISTERS.

I GATHER from the weary and not a little sour expression on their faces that my friends William, James, George and Henry are on the eve of yet another examination. These incorrigible fellows always seem to be being examined nowadays, and from that I suppose that there is among the examiners one confirmed optimist who does not despair of finding some good in one of them. But even he may eventually get annoyed, so I have

decided to forecast one or two of the questions which will probably be asked of them, and to set forth the answers thereto in such a pleasing and instructive style as is bound to secure the passing of any one of them who will take the trouble to learn such answers by heart. This indulgence I do not limit to William, James, George, or Henry; any examinee in the world is welcome to use them in whatsoever subject he may be examined, for one should never tie oneself too closely to the subject matter of the question actually asked. I have chosen the subject of Law, because my four weary and sourfaced friends are going to be barristers, and I cannot believe that they would submit to an examination in Botany or Logarithms.

Question 1. "Distinguish a crime from a tort."

Winning Answer. "One cannot be too careful in distinguishing crimes



How-eholder. "VERY HANDY, THESE BIJOU RESIDENCES. I JUST KNOCK A NAIL IN THIS WALL AND HANG UP MY HAT, AND THEN GO INTO THE BEDROOM AND HANG UP MY COAT!"

trouble will begin, we imagine, when the lady is informed why the gentleman proposed.

In a recent paper Dr. JOHANNES MENLI-HILTY recommends us to abandon the customary position of the body during sleep, and instead to place the feet higher than the head. But this is not a new idea. Gentlemen who have dined well have often been known to sleep quite soundly with their feet on the pillow.

At their forthcoming Congress the Socialist Labour Party will consider the adoption of distinctive colours for election purposes. Yellow and black have been suggested. A pretty compliment to the advanced Radical Press and to the undertakers.

Marriage *à la Carte* is the title of a



'ARRY AT THE MOTOR SHOW.

"'ERE, COME ALONG, 'ERB—WOT'S THE GOOD O' LOOKING AT THAT? CAN'T YER SEE IT'S SOLD?"

from torts. However much alike they may at first sight appear to be, there is that in their natures which is so totally different, so, one might almost say, diametrically opposite, as to lead one later to wonder how the deuce . . . I should have said, how in the world one ever came to regard them as standing in any need of being distinguished. The short truth is this: crimes are crimes and torts are torts all the world over. Given a thing which might be either, there is one efficacious and entirely conclusive test. Examine it minutely, and, if the criminal element preponderates, it is a crime; if the tortious, it is a tort."

Question 2. "Does the Statute of Limitations apply to parol contracts? Give your reasons."

Winning Answer. On the one hand a statute, being a statute, applies to everything. On the other hand this statute has, confessedly, its limitations. Yet it was no doubt with a view to its applicability, either to parol contracts or something else, that the Legislature hit on the happy device of a Statute of Limitations. I feel it is not for me to look too closely into the motives actuating a body of men so vastly superior to myself as the British law-giving authority, but since I am pressed by my indulgent examiners to state my opinion, I will

now proceed to do so, demonstrating incidental y on what grounds I establish the very definite conclusion at which I arrive." (Let me now inform you, William, James, George and Henry, that the defeating of this question is a matter of guile. Having contrived to be near the bottom of a page by this time, you finish off with the words:—"The question, does the Statute of Limitations apply to parol contracts, may be answered decidedly in the . . ." Say that was page 5, you number your next page "8," and proceed as under. It would be unwise to make any reference to the possibility of some of your pages being lost before they reach the examiner. His suspicions might be aroused. Much better let him tumble to it himself.)

"Page 8.
"of Limitations. For those, among other reasons, it will be clearly seen that the answer stated above is the right one, and the contrary opinion, though often urged with apparent seriousness in our courts of law, entirely mistaken."

Question 3. "A. is the owner of a house. B. also is the owner of a house. The houses of A. and B. adjoin. C. is a bankrupt, and has made a will in which he leaves £4,000 to D. D. has applied for debenture mortgage stock in the E. Company, Limited, to which F. is

secretary. Upon investigation it turns out that A., B., C., D., E. and F. are all one person. Trace the several effects upon the various civil and criminal rights and liabilities arising therefrom."

Winning Answer. "Much might be said on this most interesting point, but this candidate prefers to deny himself the pleasure of a minute examination of the results of the circumstances described. Rather he intends to confine himself to a courteous appeal to the better nature of his examiners, and to beg of them as a personal favour that they will let him through this time. The candidate is a married man with twenty-five children and no salary. He bears an excellent character, and, if the Court will only deal leniently with him this time, there is bound to be such a burst of enthusiasm in home circles as cannot fail to result in a very pleasant theatre party and a most substantial supper afterwards at the Carlton, to which it is as good as certain that the examiners will be invited. This is mentioned as a matter of interest, and in no way as a bribe. Thank goodness, however England may have sunk in other matters, she can still boast the finest, least partial, least corruptible and best-looking examiners in the world."

NERO AND NEROINE.

JUST as a matter of form I took a pair of gloves and drove round to the Galleries, but I did not expect to find anybody there. However, there appeared to be quite a lot of people.

"Then the dance has not been postponed?" I said to the man who accepted my coat.

"Hardly seems like it," he replied.

"Perhaps they haven't heard the news," I said; and I bustled off to find someone in authority.

A dear old friend, who used to share my Latin proses at school, approached, staggering beneath a weight of orders, ribbons, garters, rosettes and what not.

"Look here," I began at once, "this is no time for dressing up. We can't stand fiddling here while Rome is burning. You're a steward?"

"How did you guess?" he asked.

"Well, you must stop the dance. I suppose you've heard what's happened?"

"The question is, have you heard what's going to happen? My boy, I'm going to introduce you to the prettiest girl north of the Equator. Ah, here she is."

Mechanically I went through the introduction, and with a heavy heart broke into what the Press calls the "mazy waltz" with her. Feeling that the whole thing was some horrible dream I led her to a secluded corner, and offered a meringue, an ice, a cup of coffee, champagne cup, and a *marron glacé*. She refused them all.

"Yes," I said, "I agree with you. It is a mockery to sit here eating, when in the great world outside—"

"One can't begin after the very first dance, I always say."

"Sometimes I wonder if I shall ever eat again."

"Lots of people feel like that, just after— Oh, do let's talk about something else."

"There is only one thing to talk about," I cried. "The Constitution has been torn asunder—"

"I don't think you're doing what I asked you," she said coldly. "Have you been to many plays lately?"

"Plays! Haven't you heard the news? The so-called House of Lords—"

"Oh, politics! Do you know, I don't take much interest in them."

"This isn't to be dismissed lightly as 'politics,'" I said excitedly. "The whole world—north of the Equator—"

"Isn't that the music beginning? Let's go back, shall we?"

We went back; and I decided to leave the giddy throng in order to strike somehow a blow for freedom. Just as I had got my coat my friend the ambassador came up.

"A charming girl in green for you here," he said, taking me by the arm.

"The best dancer south of the Aurora Borealis. Let me introduce you."

Once more I found myself treading the mazy whirl; once more I found myself sitting on the sofa in the little room on the right as you go downstairs.

"Have you been to many dances lately?" said the girl in green.

"Is this a time for dances," I said, sternly, "when all England is reeling under a blow dealt by a handful of hereditary irresponsibles? You have not heard the tidings? They have kept the ill news from you, fearing to mar your innocent gaiety? Yet the time must come when—"

"Oh, do tell me. I love anything exciting."

"A revolution has begun, the end of which no man can foresee."

"Oh where?"

"You ask me *where*?"

"Of course you mean in Spain. But then they're always having them there, aren't they? I think Queen ENA is so sweet, don't you? Isn't the floor good to-night?"

"Spain? What of Spain? We have had a revolution forced on us in England! In England, yes; but all Europe—south of the Aurora Borealis—"

"Shall we be getting back? It's so hard to hear the music from here. I suppose you've heard about the Budget being thrown out?" she went on, as we got up. "I'm so glad, aren't you? I hate horrid taxes."

As soon as I was alone again I dashed to the cloak-room, struggled into my hat and coat, and told the porter to get me a hansom. I would shake the dust of frivolity from my shoes, and—

"Hallo," said my friend the archduke, "you can't possibly dance in all those things. Leave 'em here and the man will give you a ticket. I have a delightful girl with golden slippers just round the corner—the best talker west of Suez. She wants to sit this out with you."

Ah, here at last was a girl who understood! She too had no heart for dancing.

We sat in silence for some time in the little room on the right as you go downstairs. Then I looked all round me, saw that we were alone, and said in a hollow voice:—

"When our shords are seethed—when our swords are sheathed there will not be one Duke left."

"Have you seen Smith?" said the best talker west of Suez.

"No. Are the chosen of the people to be thwarted by a handful of irreconcilables? Shall a degenerate—"

"Don't you love MARIE LÖHR?"

"Yes. Is the Representative House to be browbeaten—"

"Do you go to many plays?"

"Several. The battle is joined; the lists are set; like a trumpet-call to lovers of liberty comes—"

"Have you read any good novels lately?"

"Five. The revolution into which the haughty backwoodsmen have entered so lightly—"

"Do you rink a great deal?"

"Moderately. Are the lords of Walbottle, the patrons of the beer bottle, to dictate—"

"Have you been to the Motor Show yet?"

"No." I sighed deeply. "Do you mind if we stop for a moment?" I said. "I'm getting rather giddy."

* * * * *

"A ravishing creature in pink," said a voice after supper; "the jolliest girl outside Pwllheli. She's been keeping a dance for you."

"This is the best tune in the book," said the ravishing creature as we took the floor. "Don't let's lose any of it. You start with the left foot—one, two, three, one, two, three."

"Which foot do you go on with? That's much more important. I shall try the right . . . This is delightful. One of us must be dancing awfully well."

"I expect it's me. What have you been doing all day? Don't say 'working'; all the others said that."

"Ah! Well, the truth is—"

"Just as you like, you know."

"The truth is," I said firmly, "I've been reading the papers. The daily papers."

"All of them—even *The Financial News*? They're awfully exciting now, aren't they?"

"Yes. Oh, yes. Only—I think I must have read too many of them. One loses one's sense of proportion."

"I like simply *everything*. Gloves, fans, handkerchiefs."

"Well, you very nearly lost me. I all but went after the third dance."

"Why? Did you have a very heavy partner?"

"No, not exactly that; but—I say, are you keen on—on politics and things?"

"Why, of course."

"Good. Then let's—let's talk about them . . . some day."

"Rather."

"Only not just now."

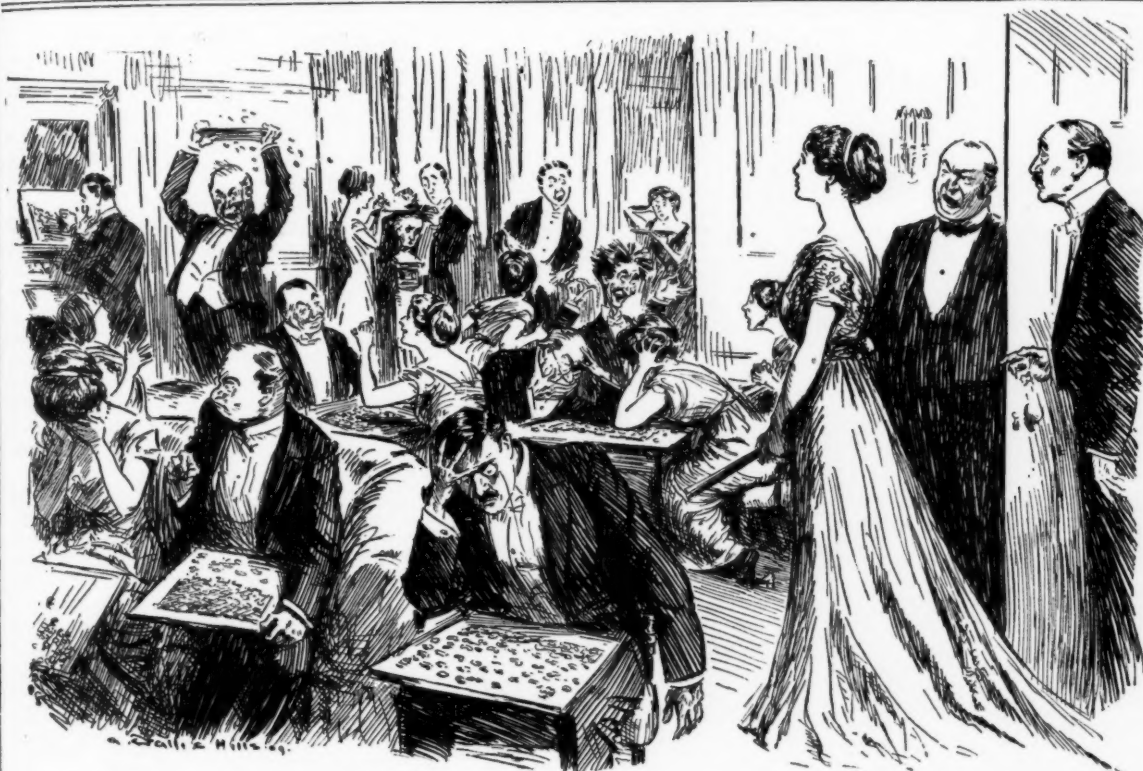
"Oh, no!"

"No, of course not. I say, have you any more dances to spare?"

"I think so. I'll see when we sit down. I'm enjoying to-night awfully, aren't you?" said the jolliest girl outside Pwllheli.

"Awfully," I said with conviction.

A. A. M.



"PICTURE PUZZLES." HARDEST PUZZLE OF ALL—TO FIND THE HOSTESS.

PAIRED OPINIONS.

FREQUENT inquiries reach us from conscientious voters as to the best way of arriving at an honest opinion upon a debatable question like Tariff Reform, when so many authoritative views are daily thrust upon them. Thus:—

- (a) What Mr. BALFOUR thinks.
- (b) What Mr. BALFOUR used to think.
- (c) What Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL says.
- (d) What Mr. WALTER LONG maintains.
- (e) What the hired roughs at Bermondsey thought.
- (f) What the hired roughs at Horley thought.
- (g) What Mr. CHAMBERLAIN said in 1884.
- (h) What Mr. DUMPHREYS said all along.
- (i) What Mr. BALFOUR declared about Old Age Pensions.
- (j) What Mr. URE subsequently reiterated.

Our answer is that frigid and calculated organisation is necessary; method alone will bring peace. Let the conscientious voter do as we do—paste on uniform cards all the statements as they appear, put them in a drawer, go through them every week, take out and destroy all pairs (i.e., statements which cancel one another), and decide, for the time being, by such arguments as remain, if any.

The above list appears, on the face of it, to promise great confusion of conscience. Actually, it is quite simple, the pairs being, of course, as follows:—a, b; c, d; e, f; g, h; i, j. An opinion formed before these arguments were put forth would therefore remain intact.

The filing system, thus adapted to politics, not only brings mental quiet and ensures a right decision, but affords pleasant recreation during the winter evenings, highly instructive to the little ones.

LINES TO TWO LIBERAL KNIGHTS.

STOUT *shikaris* tiger-hunting are accustomed, ere they shoot,
To invoke Sir PERCY BUNTING, to adjure Sir JESSE BOOT.

Savage Dukes, their hecklers fronting, grow incontinently
mute

If they see Sir PERCY BUNTING or espy Sir JESSE BOOT.

Freshmen on the Cherwell punting, as they twang the festive
lute,

Serenade Sir PERCY BUNTING and extol Sir JESSE BOOT.

Hooligans, their stature s'unting with the premature cheroot,
Quail before Sir PERCY BUNTING, blench before Sir JESSE BOOT.

Pigs at once refrain from grunting, owls instanter cease to
hoot,

Daunted by Sir PERCY BUNTING, chidden by Sir JESSE BOOT.

Engines in the act of shunting shriek with ecstasy acute
If they see Sir PERCY BUNTING or behold Sir JESSE BOOT.

E'en the year's autumnal tunting brightlier glows on leaf and
fruit

Wheresoe'er Sir PERCY BUNTING wanders with Sir JESSE BOOT.

"The most successful of the three dances was the Daffodil, a charmingly pretty waltz which introduces the pas de cheval, this being the first time, so far as is known, that this movement, suggestive of the prancing horse, has been introduced into any ballroom dance."

Daily M. I.

The writer must be mistaken; we have certainly noticed this movement for years past.



First Farmer. "ERE, YOU REMEMBER TELLING ME YOU GAVE YOUR 'OSS TURPENTINE WHEN 'E 'AD COLIC."

Second Farmer. "AY!"

First Farmer. "WELL, I GAVE MY 'OSS TURPENTINE, AN' 'E DIED."

Second Farmer. "WELL, MINE DIED TOO!"

THE BRITON'S BIRTHRIGHT.

Extract from a letter condemnatory of the increased duty on whisky:—"Some persons are born teetotal to their own misfortune, others achieve teetotalism by their own weaknesses, but the men who have made this nation for us, and we who have yet to consolidate our great Empire for our descendants, are men of strength."

O, WHA but we should rule the sea?
The men o' "pith an' power,"
Wha spread the sway we haud this
day,
They aye were hauf-seas-owre.
Where'er the Union Jack has flown,
Has followed Britain's law—
"One race, one speech, one flag, one
Throne,
One dram"—or maybe twa.

Thae feckless, puir, teetotal loons,
For them my heart is wae!
Hoo can they ken the strength o'
men

Weel primed wi' usquebae?
The nation's wark is no' for them;
They e'en may lay it down;
They little think it's nocht but Drink
That mak's the warld gae roun'.

Though fules may jibe, we 'll aye
imbibe
The spirit o' the age,
An' stootly stan', as straucht's we can,
Tae guard oor heritage;
For gin it hap we should let drap
The knack o' gettin' fou—
Britain beware! for then and there
Ye meet yer Waterloo!

BOOKMEN AS CANDIDATES.

THE announcement that, like Mr. METHUEN, Mr. HEINEMANN also contemplates entering the Parliamentary arena comes as no surprise to those who have been watching the trend of ambition in literary circles.

Mr. HEINEMANN's first intention, we understand, was to offer himself as a candidate for the Isle of Heinemann, as his famous client, Mr. HALL CAINE, wittily calls it. Imagine his disappointment on ascertaining that the Isle of Heinemann has no representative at Westminster! Mr. HEINEMANN, however, has since been greatly gratified by the pressing invitation of the Bayswater International Association that he should come forward as an Independent candidate in the Humanitarian interest.

Enormous satisfaction is expressed in Non-conformist literary circles at the announcement that Sir WILLIAM ROBERTSON NICOLL, M.O.K., O.O., will contest the Crockett division of Galloway in the Kailyard interest. There was some natural disappointment in the hop county that Sir William was not going to carry the banner of Lloyd-Georgian Reform to victory at the head of the Men of Kent, but it is generally admitted that the claims of the Kailyard Caucus were irresistible. Mr. DAVID LYALL and the Reverend CLAUDIUS CLEAR have already thrown themselves into the campaign with extraordinary energy, and there is hardly a hamlet in the whole division which has not already been waked to ecstasy by the intoxicating eloquence of those two superb and pathetic orators.

Mr. JOHN LONG, on recently being asked whether he was going to stand for Parliament, returned a somewhat enigmatic answer. "Whether I go to Westminster or not," he replied, "at any rate I mean to stand by Wales."

Mr. EVELEIGH NASH, it appears, also favours the gallant little Principality, a safe seat having been offered him in Cardiganshire. Asked why he was attracted to this particular locality, Mr. NASH observed, "Cardiganshire has always appealed to me through its picturesque qualities and associations. What should we do without Cardigan waistcoats? The town of Cardigan, perhaps you may not be aware, has two stone bridges across the river Teifi, an old and stately church, and the remains of an ancient castle famous in Welsh history. I feel that as its Member I should be able to do much to restore the fallen fortunes of this romantic spot."

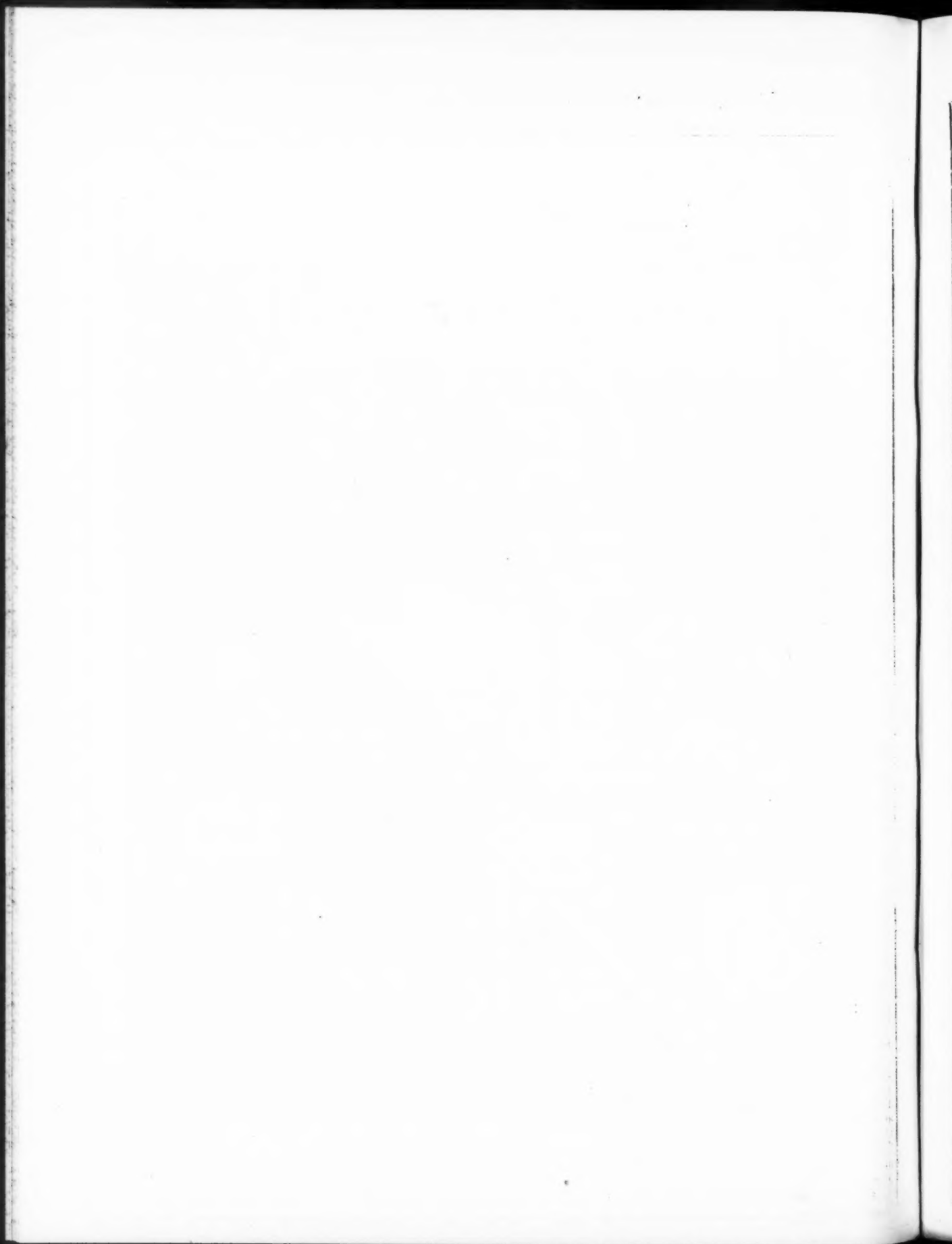
Lastly, Mr. CLEMENT K. SHORTER, it is freely bruited in Fleet Street, is considering the urgent request of the Haworth Liberal Association to stand for that division of Yorkshire.



CHARGE AND COUNTERCHARGE.

HIS HONOUR JOHN BULL. "AND WHICH IS THE PLAINTIFF?"

BOTH. "ME, SIR!"



ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

EXTRACTED FROM THE DIARY OF TOBY, M.P.



AWFUL SCENE OF GLOOM AND DEJECTION, WHEN THE MINISTRY HEARD OF THE LORDS' DECISION TO REFER THE BUDGET TO THE COUNTRY.

House of Lords, Tuesday, November 16.—Something delightfully casual, superbly English, about Parliamentary manner at great crises. To-day climax reached in first stage of one that promises to exceed any that have shaken the country since Reform Bill times. Incidentally, but primarily, existence of House of Lords as partner in legislative machine is at stake.

Common knowledge that LANSDOWNE, punctual in his place at 4.30, carries in waistcoat pocket the final, irrevocable challenge to fight to the finish. Yet attendance limited to a score of Peers. On front bench to right of Woolsack CREWE and GRANARD sole representatives of a threatened Government. For companions on the other side of Table, HALSBURY, CAWDOR, LONDONDERRY, SALIS-

BURY, MARLBOROUGH, DONOUGHMORE and ASHBOURNE support their Leader.

Brief pause followed on striking of half-hour. Silence broken by voice of LANSDOWNE, discovered standing at Table with fateful scrap of paper in hand.

"My Lords," he said, "I beg to give notice that on the second reading of the Finance Bill I will move that this House is not justified in giving its consent to this Bill until it has been submitted to the judgment of the country."

That was all. Had he been observing across the Table into the languid ear of Earl CREWE that it was a fine day, there might have been more inflection of emotion in his tone, more of flutter in his manner. CREWE seemed on point of replying, "Yes, but rather cold, don't

you think?" Recognising irrelevancy of remark he forbore.

No cheer burst forth from confident Opposition, no sharp response from jubilant Ministerialists. AMPHILL put a question as to position of British Indians in Transvaal, and House proceeded to deal with the Orders of the Day.

HALSBURY'S imperturbability a cloak for exuberant honest satisfaction.

"This 'll teach 'em, Toby, dear boy," he said, as we crossed Lobby by closed doors of deserted, desolate Commons. "Those Radicals, with URE at their head, have been putting about stories to effect that we, the old nobility, are influenced in opposition to Budget by personal considerations, strengthened by sympathy with an honourable Trade."

It is true LLOYD GEORGE, with Welsh attorney instinct, mulets landowners in various ways. Increases the Death Duties; invents a Super-tax specially designed to catch a pensioned ex-Lord Chancellor. Also puts up charges on Licensed Victuallers. What of that? LANSDOWNE'S amendment distinctly shows that all we think of is the welfare of the country. We are not going to sit by and see it trampled upon by the vote of 300 so-called representatives of the people. Lord Collin is the friend of every man who has a vote. Mr. Short is a fraud."

"But," I asked, "isn't there some little difficulty on a constitutional question? Didn't you in 1897, when SPENCER, KIMBERLEY, and other Liberal Peers desired to move amendment to Voluntary Schools Bill involving money question, quote with approval Sir THOMAS MAY'S dictum that 'all aids and supplies to His Majesty in Parliament are the sole gift of the Commons, not to be changed or altered by the House of Lords?' And didn't you thereupon declare SPENCER'S Amendment out of order?"

"Tut, tut, TOBY, M.P. You are, after all, a sort of child in these matters. We were in office at the time. The Bill to which you allude was *our* measure, and we weren't going to have it mauled by Liberal hands. Suppose you never heard of the *re tort* of LITTLETON upon COKE in a famous leading case, 'Circumstances alter cases?'"

Business done.—Lord LANSDOWNE tables amendment disposing of Budget Bill.

Wednesday night.—From darkest depths of disputation round Irish Land Bill the MEMBER FOR SARK has always seen the stars. It seemed all up with the bantling when the Lords almost literally mangled it. Certainty of early funeral confirmed when the Commons, disdaining to discuss the Lords' amendments *seriatim*, disagreed with them *en bloc*. But there's money in it, and SARK does not remember a case when either Irish landlord or tenant refused to take cash from the Saxon.

Facts of case simple. GEORGE WYNDHAM'S well-meant scheme for facilitating transfer of Irish land from owner to tenant has broken down owing to faulty financial provisions. These ST. AUGUSTINE proposes to remedy. The bonus bestowed by the Wyndham Bill by way of oiling the machinery of transfer was twelve millions sterling. The Bill Lords and Commons have been playing battle-dore and shuttlecock with proposes to throw in an extra three millions, completing a total of between seventy and eighty millions, for which the British tax-payer, that modern ISSACHAR, an ass borne down by cruel burdens, will provide.

Controversy between Lords and Commons arose upon landlords and tenants fighting each other for larger share of the plunder. To-night, Bill comes back for the consideration of Commons' reasons for disagreeing with Lords' amendments. The landlords, justly fearful of losing the bone whilst snatching at its reflection in the brook, cave in and agree not to insist on their amendments.

That all very well if they stopped there. Proceeded to carry others less drastic but not more likely to be accepted by Irish Nationalists. So Bill goes back to Commons, still in peril. But, as SARK insists, an additional three millions is not to be wantonly chucked away.

Business done.—Irish Land Bill further considered.

JUST AS YOU LIKE IT.

[Being a close adaptation of "As You Like It," Act II., Scene 5, including the famous invocation, "Ducdame, ducdame, ducdame."]

Mr. Asquith sings:

UNDER St. Stephen's fane,
Who would with me remain,
Tuning his merry note
Unto old CORDEN'S throat,
Come hither, come hither, come hither:
Here shall he see
No enemy,
But Free Trade and fair weather.

Mr. Balfour sings:

Who doth all dumping shun
And loves to live i' the sun,
Growing the food he eats,
Content with what he gets,
Come hither, come hither, come hither:
Here shall he see
No enemy,
But Tariff and fine weather.

Mr. Lloyd George sings:

Since it has come to pass
That every idle ass
Loves his own wealth and ease,
Grown rich by slow degrees
(Dukes dam'em, dukes dam'em, dukes
dam'em):
He, even he,
Well tax'd shall be
An if he will come to me.

Mr. Asquith.—What's that "Dukes dam'em"?

Mr. Lloyd George.—"Tis an East End invocation for calling fools within my circle. I'll get my Bill passed if I can; if I cannot, I'll rail against all the well-born in England.

Mr. Asquith.—And I'll go worry the Lords; their ruin is prepared. [*Exeunt.*]

The French Manner.

"The Committee appointed as its chairman Professor G. F. Charnock, and embraced a number of gentlemen of recognised ability."—*The Engineer.*

FROM THE ETHICAL BILGE-TUB.

WE have received the appeal of "The International Order of Ethics and Culture," which seeks to replace "our crumbling religions" with a brotherly friendship "founded on the mutual inspiration of social-ethical actions." The "programm" of the new Order is quite in keeping with these high aims. It "prescribes moral and financial help for all the progressive currants [*sic*] as far as they are in accordance with the principles of the Order," and creates

"a sort of community whose meetings are open for everybody, official speeches in the case of funerals, weddings and in other important and emotional events of life if somebody is asking for it or if the clergyman refuses the attendance."

The organisation of the Order is absolutely democratic:—

"We are fighting dogmatism of any kind as well as every worship of authorities. In our circles there shall be cultivated but noble friendship. We remark that we exclude from our meetings any acoholic beverage, doing so for the sake of opposing the unreasonable drinking customs and in order to secure the majesty and the earnestness of our work. We acknowledge by this the full right of the antiacoholic movement and other social and ethical movements of the kind, but we don't command our members any obligation of such kind for their private life."

After all, the best guarantee of the seriousness of the new movement is afforded by the list of its officers and supporters. The President of the International Central Committee is Miss Gertrud Woker, of Berne, and amongst others "the following personalities have declared to be in accordance with the aims of the Order":—

Rev. E. Baars, Vegesack (Breme).
Prof. Dr. Odo Bujwid.
Paul Geheeb, Pedagogist.
Miss Mally Kachel.
Leopold Katscher.
Dr. A. Suter-Ruffly.
Dr. Sakeby (London).
Director Kiss, Budapest.

But the names of distinguished men and women of science are not enough. "Homes must be established everywhere . . . To found a Home we want but 5 plucky persons who devote about 2 hours weekly to our cause." We sincerely trust that this interesting community will lend such impetus to the progressive currants that they will sweep away the vicious customs of the past in an avalanche of antiacoholic enthusiasm.

"On Saturday the Sutton Town Band returned the compliment by coming to Epsom, where an enjoyable programme was given by the Town Clock."—*Epsom Advertiser.*

Unfortunately the repertoire of our town clocks is so very limited.



Highland Ferryman (during momentary lull in the storm). "I'M THENKIN', SIR, I'LL JUST TACK YER FARE; THERE'S NO SAYIN' WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN TAE US."

LIEUTENANT SMITH.

[Territorial officers are sometimes mystified at the strange way in which words of command are mutilated for the sake of smartness at the Chelsea School of Instruction: the Guards, for instance, execute certain movements on the word "HIPE."]

LIEUTENANT SMITH, a "Terrier," fared forth to learn his trade; Boldly he went to Chelsea School and stood upon parade. They rated and they humbled him; and then, when all was ripe, They crowned his efforts with a smile and taught him to say "HIPE."

With rare enthusiasm filled, back to his corps went he, Resolved that all should share his luck and learn this mystery. He proved to all his N.C.O.s that any form or type Of movement could be carried out by merely shouting, "HIPE."

Amongst a batch of raw recruits he chanced to get to know A butcher with a splendid voice who hailed from Pimlico; When evening fell this man was wont to shout the joys of tripe Smith made him sergeant on the spot, and changed the word to "HIPE."

Intoxicated with success, he madly cast away His whistle and his compass, and even his *épée*! And when on Company Parade bestowed an extra stripe On Corporal Jones, who gave the word: "Move to the left in—HIPE!"

At length the Adjutant, informed of Smith's insane career, Took the young man apart, and said, "None of your Guards' tricks here; You've done your duty, passed your Schools; but now, Sir, you must wipe Your military tablets clean: we can't put up with 'HIPE.'"

My tale is done: the maggot word had camped within his brain.

'Twas two years later when I saw Lieutenant Smith again; I met him in a country place where I was shooting snipe; Poor chap, he scares the hungry crow; and all he says is "HIPE."

CROWNED CRITICS.

AFTER inspecting the famous wax bust in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum, the Emperor of GERMANY has declared that he has no doubt that it is a genuine Leonardo, and rumours are current that, following his great example, other exalted personages are prepared to make similar pronouncements and settle once and for all the disputes of artists, archaeologists and historians.

The King of GREECE, for instance, is said to have expressed his royal conviction that the ninth and tenth books of the *Iliad* are both up to sample, and that the *Odyssey* was not written by a woman; he also exonerates PHIDIAS from the accusation of having carved portraits of himself and PERICLES on the shield of Athena. Just at present he is preparing an authoritative plan of the battle of Salamis (480 B.C.) in order to clear up a few points that have puzzled historians.

King VICTOR EMMANUEL, again, has promised the Pope to look round the galleries of the Vatican some afternoon and settle the dates of one or two disputed pieces of statuary.

It will also come as a great relief to many hesitating antiquarians to learn that the KHEDIVE is assured that the great Sphinx is genuine, and was probably there in the time of MOSES.

President FALLIÈRES is another exalted *cognoscente*, and is preparing a monograph showing the original disposition of the lost arms of the Venus of Melos.

Meanwhile Big BILL TAFT won't say whether Cook got to the Big Nail or not.

THE GOLD-FISH.

WHEN Saccharissa said she wanted some gold-fish I naturally asked why. These were her "reasons":—

- (a) I want them.
 - (b) They look so tweet and twinkly in a dear little bowl.
 - (c) They are soothing to watch.
 - (d) Their up-keep costs so little.
 - (e) The water absorbs the gases in the room.
 - (f) I want them.
- I countered thus:—
- (a) You don't *really* want them.
 - (b) The stars are tweeter and twinklier "in that inverted bowl we call the sky."
 - (c) You can watch me smoking.
 - (d) When Tariff Reform comes their food may cost us more.
 - (e) I can be no party to fish-poisoning.
 - (f) I don't.

She listened patiently, murmured "Yes, darling, but—" at intervals, kissed me resignedly, and said, "Well, dearest, if you're *determined* . . . and I had set my heart on them."

So of course I bought a couple of the little beggars next day.

Saccharissa greeted me rapturously, dropped the bowl on the floor, and screamed. William and Mary (I had named them already) lay gasping.

"Oh, Jack, what shall we do?" she wailed.

"Give them air!" I shouted. "Or, rather, water. Quick!"

She flew for a basin and returned panting. Then, as she hates clammy things, she picked them up with the fish-slice and dropped them into their native element. They looked almost as relieved as Saccharissa.

"Will it hurt them, do you think?" she quavered. "Is there anything else we could do?"

"Well . . . we might put a dash of whisky in, to buck them up a bit, but—"

"Cruel!" she flashed, "to make fun of a dumb—"

"All right! Try them with an ant's-egg—one each—mustn't let 'em gorge."

A couple of ant's-eggs were administered, and, would you believe it? that hog William snaffled both.

"Oh, poor Mary!" said Saccharissa. "And I'm sure she's starving—see how she keeps on opening and shutting her mouth!"

"Merely bad language," I said. "The water deadens the sound."

"Do you think so? . . . Well, I wish she wouldn't—it looks perfectly *beastly*. Jack, why don't they drown when they open their mouths?"

"Because they breathe with their gills, of course. Fancy not knowing that!"

"But their gills are open too," she objected.

"How on earth could they breathe with them shut?"

"Ye—s, but why—"

"Mary is ready for another ant's-egg," I said firmly. "Tempt her to beg—see if she'll stand on her tail. I'll keep William off with the paper-knife."

Mary was uppish and refused to beg. As for William, I was simply disgusted. After several futile efforts to elude the paper-knife he went to the bottom and sulked—like a naughty child.

"Stir him up," said Saccharissa. "I'm sorry he has such a vile temper. Stir him up!"

"Give me an egg-whisk," I said, "and William shall think he is helping at a performance of 'The Maelstrom' at the Hippodrome."

"No, we mustn't be heartless. Just a weeny poke."

I gave him a "weeny" poke, and William simply hared round the basin, looking as sick as mud.

"That's enough," said Saccharissa presently, "or else he'll get curvature of the spine. We mustn't over-tire him, bad though he is. Oh, I am glad you bought them, Jack! They will be a perpetual source of joy!"

"H'm!" I grunted.

She tended them zealously for three days, "changing the water" whenever she felt dull or had nothing special to do. William had a near shave in the sink once. If the grating had been a hair's-breadth bigger, or if William had eaten fewer ant's-eggs for breakfast, his number would have gone up. The fourth day she asked me to feed them, as she was "busy." The next day they were forgotten altogether, and starved. Saccharissa, on discovering her error, wept bitterly and grossly over-fed them.

For a week they batted on a generous diet; then she was "busy" again and I had to feed them.

I fed them without protest for three days. Then I reminded Saccharissa that they were her fish, not mine. She said—quite mildly—"Yes, dear."

After a fortnight had passed without change, I suggested that as the fish had lost interest for her I might at least get some fun out of the investment. Why not a bent pin and a worm, or races in the bath?

The idea "did not appeal to her."

Disgusted at such ingratitude, I advocated a little dinner to our *parvenus* friends, the Browns. Why not take the shine out of them with an up-to-date savoury, "Gold-fish on Toast"? She said I was always thinking of my—of food.

So I said, "Dash it! We are both sick of them. Let's give them away!"

"What a waste!" she said.

It was a real relief when the cat did a little fishing on her own account.

A CITY SHOW.

[The Lord Mayor of London is said to be anxious to restore the old system of apprenticeship.]

My Lord, once more in "old Cockayne"

Your words have found my thoughts a setting;

I draw on Fancy's strings again
And set her puppets pirouetting;
The curtain's up, then, trumpets blare;
No waits occur at Fancy-Fair!

Your bold apprentice from his bench
I see play truant down the alley
To watch a fight, or woo a wench,
Or, leaving cares of task and tally,
He goes by Holborn Bar to see
A junketting at Tyburn Tree.

Then o'er a tankard in the Chepe
I watch some swell Dick Turpin
racket,

Gape at his ruffles' dainty sweep,
Admire the lace upon his jacket,
And see the silver-mounted pair
Of barkers which I knew he'd wear!

I watch him toss his liquor down;
The still-room maid he gaily banter;
He flings the grinning boo's a crown,
Jumps on his mare, and off he canters;
A dirty scoundrel? Oh, of course!
But what a seat upon a horse!

I hear the mail-guard blow his horn,
I chat with watchmen in the porches,
I see a golden summer morn
Steal up and drowse the linkmen's
torches,

Before my Lady mounts her chair
For Lincoln's Inn, from Crosby Square!

Thus, then, and thus my mummers play;
They bow with old-world airs and
graces;

Then through the misty wings they stray
Back to the silent, shadow places,
To wait in some dim green-room's hall
For Fancy's cue—for Memory's call!

Our Boys.

"Rudgard carefully cut the tip off his cigarette. . . . He drew his liqueur stand towards him, and, pouring out a glass of ab inthe, drank it off at a gulp."—*Daily News* feuilleton.

The young dog!

The Modern Shoot.

"Mr. M. J. Sutton's shooting party had a capital day's sport on the Holme Park estate. Eight guns accounted for over 500 head of pheasants, ducks, hares and rabbits, most of which had been most generously distributed locally and otherwise."—*Reading Mercury*.

Once more the idea of making two of the above words lean to the right is ours.



THE PRIVATE VIEW.

Lady Goldberg. "WELL, GENERAL, WHAT WERE YOU AND YOUR CHARMING DAUGHTER SAYING ABOUT MY PORTRAIT?"

Ga'lant General (who prides himself on his tremendous tact). "MY DEAR LADY, I MAKE IT AN INVARIABLE RULE ON THESE OCCASIONS NEVER TO REMARK ON ANY PORTRAIT. THERE IS TOO GREAT A CHANCE OF THE ORIGINAL BEING WITHIN EAR-SHOT."

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks.)

It looks as if ROBERT HICHENS, in his recent trifle, *Barbary Sheep*, was giving us a little of the superfluous material left over from the preparation of his present larger work, *Bella Donna* (HEINEMANN). In both novels he handles the same rather distasteful theme, the passion of an Englishwoman for an Oriental. But, while in *Barbary Sheep* the lady's infatuation was abrupt and improbable, here, in *Bella Donna*, he is dealing with a type that is clearly *capable de tout*. It has been a weakness with Mr. HICHENS to be too expansive. Usually, instead of putting himself to the pains of selecting the one right word or phrase, he gives us a round score to choose from. And in *Bella Donna* he still seems to mistrust the imagination of his readers and even to doubt if they are giving him their full attention; for he is constantly reminding them of his Nile background with its familiar noises and movements. But, apart from this reiteration of certain details, the old fault has been amended. From the first page, where he introduces a most intriguing portrait of a fashionable doctor, the story is told with an economy of language which increases with the growing interest of the action. In the last half, indeed, we are scarcely allowed breathing-time for reflection; otherwise we should perhaps wonder whether he has provided *Bella*

Donna with an adequate motive for the attempted destruction of her husband by poison. Certainly no sufficient argument is advanced to show that his elimination was an essential to her freedom, she being the woman she was; or that she was likely to feel more comfortable in the rather variegated *ménage* of the Græco-Egyptian *Baroudi*, if she had joined it as a widow rather than as a runaway wife. But I was too well entertained to worry much about this. What did worry me a little was the author's reference to ROBERT BROWNING as having carried his new wife away "to the peaks of the Apennines." There can no longer be any need for concealment in the matter; anyhow it is an open secret that he took her to the low-lying plains of Tuscany to keep her warm. To have exposed her on the snow-bound summits would have been a cruel experiment, which might well have justified the indignation of his father-in-law.

Poor distressful old Ireland! People who write novels about it always will try to make their fiction funny—I suppose for the sake of contrast with the tragedy of its figures and failings and facts. *The Search Party*, by Mr. G. A. BIRMINGHAM (a name which has already, I fancy, had something to do with the making of Irish history), is, according to Messrs. METHUEN, "pure comedy from beginning to end." Inconsequent, farcical, comic-opera kind of comedy I should call it; tolerable and even amusing with lights and music and pretty faces and dresses to help it out. But in cold

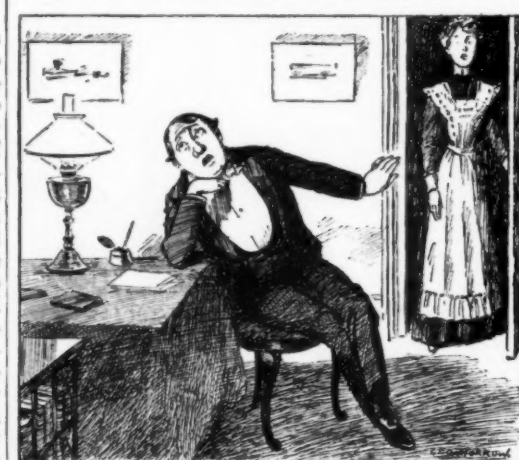
prose it is like the little girl i' the nursery rhyme. If it is to be good, it must be very, very good. Otherwise—but perhaps I had better explain what the search party were after. It is not, as you may be thinking, a case of *cherchez la femme*; the hunt is after the village doctor, the village buffoon, two M.P.'s and a sergeant and constable of the R.I.C., kidnapped one after the other and shut up in the same room by an alien manufacturer of bombs, who had lately settled in the part of "Connacht" to which four of them belonged. At first no one but the doctor's sweetheart seemed to think his disappearance at all odd, but at last with great difficulty she persuaded the M.P.'s wives, and the local Peer (there is always a local Peer in Irish stories), and the rest of the local constabulary to join in searching for the missing men. And when they found them they were all playing leap-frog in their dormitory prison, M.P.'s, doctor, sergeant, constable and buffoon, and making no attempt to escape, though they knew that their captor had got away in his motor-car fourteen hours before. And the end of the comedy was that they all agreed to say nothing more about it, an example which I cannot do better than follow.

Draw in your Stool, says OLIVER ONIONS, says he; and so I did, and listened, under the auspices of Messrs. MILLS AND BOON, to a considerable number of short stories with plenty of the right stuff in them. Perhaps the least successful effort is the first, which deals with a romantic episode in the grand old days of *Dec. Jun. Brutus* and *J. Cæsar*, just before the siege of Massilia (705 A.D., I fancy). No doubt Gaulish galley-slaves had their sentimental passages at the period, but the "cavvy" is a bit too long for my imagination. The next, which describes a bull-fight, is vastly better; but the author shines most, I think, in Yorkshire, whether on the moors, by the mine head, or along the coast, and "The Golden Farmer," "Jacques," "Karberry," and "The Splasher" are all very good. The last story, too, deserves special mention, because there is a murder in it, perpetrated (if that is the word) with an icicle broken off a pump-spout. Here, I think, Mr. ONIONS has shown himself unenterprising to the last degree; he ought to have spun the story out into a serial, and offered blood money for the solution of the "Mystery of the Manor Yard." Suppose there had been a thaw next day, where was the evidence? Anyhow, *Draw in your Stool* by all means and ye winna regret it.

I wonder whether, when MAUD STEPNEY RAWSON had written her latest novel, she was a little at a loss what to call it. If so, she had decidedly a happy thought in giving it the title it now bears, because *Happiness* (METHUEN) is a story less of particular events than of life in general, and compact of "a number of things" making for contentment or the reverse. Naturally, however, this makes the book almost impossible to describe in detail. I shall content myself with a record of my personal pleasure in it, and the remark that of the many characters that crowd a very wide surface I was most interested in that of old *Telham*, the oilcloth millionaire, whose efforts to win happiness for himself and others meet with such pathetic disaster. For the rest, the book struck

me as essentially feminine (in the best sense). It is full of delightful women, very wise and modern and subtle, holding broad views upon life, and perhaps just a little too ready to express them on all occasions, with special emphasis on topics that must, some years ago, have been left untouched. In her desire for sincerity the author has at times been (if I may say so very gently) a little too contemptuous of mere titillation. But, this apart, *Happiness* remains a notable achievement in modern fiction, and that sadly rare thing, a novel that is worth buying to read and keep.

Upon the fifteenth page of *The Last Lord Aranley* (MILLS AND BOON) I read, "Then, for the first time, she saw that his face was not the face of a man, but of a wild beast, and in spite of the pleading look in his large, lustrous eyes, a wave of revulsion swept through the girl's whole frame." And afterwards, at great length, GERALD MAXWELL describes *Millicent Tabor's* struggle to like this unfortunate being well enough to marry him. What, however, I feel most forcibly about the book is the pity that so much labour has been wasted upon such an unsavory subject. Sympathy both for *Lord Aranley* and for his mother I can feel poignantly; I am conscious also of the atmosphere of doom and terror which surrounds this man with the monster's face; but in his love-affair I can feel no sympathetic interest whatever. Indeed, "a wave of revulsion" sweeps over me, too, at the thought of it. *Lord Aranley* has, of course, to die, so that life may be made easy for *Millicent*, and I must admit that his death is most elaborately and thoroughly stage-managed. This was only fair to him, for the wretched man had had but a poor show in the drama of life.



Maid "DINNER IS QUITE READY, SIR."
Poet. "HUSH! A BEAUTIFUL THOUGHT IS HOVERING NEAR ME.
I MUST SACRIFICE THE SOUP!"

Moretum is, I understand, a Latin word signifying a peculiar kind of salad, a mixture of herbs and condiments mentioned by VIRGIL. This information comes from a *junior optime* in the Mathematical Tripos, and may, therefore, be accepted with every confidence. *Moretum Alterum*, recently published by CHAPMAN AND HALL, is a literary salad composed by J. B. WINTERBOTHAM. His ingredients are a cultivated mind, wide reading, sympathy, a happy knack of quotation and allusion, and a pleasant gift of expression in a considerable range of subjects. Result, a book of essays which may be read with profit, interest and amusement by many sorts and conditions of men. Not the least attractive part of the volume consists of the sonnets which are interspersed between the essays. These display no ordinary mastery over a difficult form. I hope we shall have more from Mr. WINTERBOTHAM—more both of essays and of sonnets.

Sir HENRY NORMAN on the crisis:—

"The incredible has happened. It will be followed by the inevitable." A very tame sequel.

"Wanted, Emma, Kidnapped, Two Years Ago, Salem Chapel, cheap; books, magazines, in exchange."—*The Lady*.

"Cheap" seems the right word. Certainly the reward offered for the unfortunate child after two years' absence is not excessive.